Message Text

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R 010026Z JUL 77 FM SECSTATE WASHDC TO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:ENGR, SW

SUBJECT: SWEDEN'S NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PROBLEM

REF.: (A) STOCKHOLM 2620; (B) STOCKHOLM 562, (C) STOCKHOLM A-1

1. IF SWEDEN'S "CONDITIONS ACT" ON DISPOSAL OF SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL IS ESSENTIALLY AS DESCRIBED IN REFS B AND C, THEN THE ARGUMENT OF THAM ET AL. GIVEN IN PARA 4 OF STOCKHOLM 2620 APPEARS TO OMIT THE ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE AVAILABLE TO SWEDISH POWER COMPANIES OF SHOWING "HOW AND WHERE AN ENTIRELY SAFE FINAL STORAGE OF USED, BUT NOT REPROCESSED, NUCLEAR FUEL CAN TAKE PLACE".

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2. EMBASSY'S EXCELLENT REPORTING ON SWEDEN'S NUCLEAR PROBLEM MAKES IT PLAIN ENOUGH THAT SWEDEN LOOKS TO REPROCESSING AS SOLUTION TO SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL DISPOSAL PROBLEM, AND DEPARTMENT IS, AS A RESULT, AWARE OF THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE SITUATION. ALL OF THIS WILL NO DOUBT GET A THOROUGH AIRING DURING SODER VISIT AND SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN LEIFLAND AND NYE, BUT WE DO WISH TO NOTE THAT

IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT, UNDER SWEDISH LAW, REPROCESSING, WHILE PREFERRED, APPEARS NOT TO BE THE ONLY SOLUTION

PERMITTED. EMBASSY COMMENTS ON THIS POINT WOULD BE WELCOME.

3. WE RECOGNIZE, OF COURSE, THE PRESENT DIFFICULTY OF MEETING DEFINITION OF "ENTIRELY SAFE FINAL STORAGE OF USED, BUT NOT REPROCESSED, NUCLEAR FUEL". THIS IS A PRIME AREA FOR EXAMINATION BY INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE EVALUATION, AND WE WOULD WELCOME SWEDISH PARTICIPATION IN THIS EVALUATION. MOREOVER, THE U.S. WELCOMES COOPERATIVE RESEARCH ARRANGEMENTS, SUCH AS THE ONE PENDING BETWEEN ERDA AND THE SWEDISH POWER BOARD, WHICH INTER ALIA MAY DEMONSTRATE THE FEASIBILITY OF SAFE FINAL STORAGE OF UNREPROCESSED SPENT FUEL. DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP EMBASSY INFORMED OF OUR THINKING ON THIS PROBLEM AND OF DEVELOPMENTS HERE AFFECTING SWEDISH NUCLEAR PROGRAM. VANCE

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